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Original research article

Accident prevention and first aid knowledge among preschool children's parents

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Based on both international and national health statistics, accidents from various mechanisms are among the most common causes of death in childhood. Our aim was to examine the first aid and accident prevention knowledge and attitudes of parents.

Materials and methods: In this study, parents of 3–7 years old children were involved in six kindergartens located in Hungary. A self-fill-in questionnaire applying standardized items was used to collect data. In the investigation, 307 parents ($N = 307$) were included. Out of them, 234 persons filled out the questionnaire correctly ($n = 234$). The statistical analysis was made with SPSS 20.0 statistical software. For analysis descriptive statistics, Chi-square-test and ANOVA were used.

Results: Three-quarters of the children have suffered at least one accident in their past life (74.3%). A total number of 174 parents attended first aid courses earlier (74.4%). The previous knowledge is based mainly on the personal information on their driving license (81.6%). Based on parent's results, there is a need for teaching first aid (70.5%) and accident prevention (89.7%) to children in kindergarten. There were only 10 parents, who answered all the featured first aid situations correctly (4.3%). Between the subjective judgment of the financial status and the correct answers we found a significant correlation ($p = 0.03$). The previously accomplished first aid training ($p < 0.05$) and the educational attainment ($p = 0.029$) had a positive impact regarding the correct answers.

Conclusion: The level of first aid knowledge among the parents of kindergarten children was lower than expected. With an offer to participate in a first aid course the level of knowledge from both sides (children and parents) could be increased. This could contribute to a better accident prevention and first aid practice among parents.

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Introduction

According to statistics, accidents from various mechanical devices are among the most common causes of death all over the world, including Hungary. Accidents can happen anywhere, to anyone, and children and adults are affected equally. Children are especially involved in accidents due to the tendencies of their age characteristics (lack of fear, inquisitiveness) [1–4].

Based on the Central Statistical Office (KSH) data, 1838 home related accidents occurred in 2011 in Hungary [5]. The number of accidents usually increases during early childhood and adolescence. The rise in accidents for adolescents may be related to traffic accidents caused by those with newly acquired driving licenses (there were 15,174 traffic accidents involving personal injury in 2012 in Hungary, in which 605 were fatal) [5]. The statistics show that more young people between 0 and 24 aged group die in different types of accidents, than all the other reasons [6]. In Hungary about 24,000 children are hospitalized every year, from which about 300 involve fatalities [5]. A significant risk group are consisted of kindergarten children (3–7 years old), because they are often involved in accidents [1,6]. Thus, it will be important to have a person close to the child who has appropriate knowledge about accidents because with proper attention they can be prevented. Therefore, the parents have a great, deal of responsibility. An adequate amount of first aid knowledge can increase the chances of survival of the injured person. Since children spend most of their time at home, most of the accidents occur at home [7,8]. The most common types of accidents are; falls, burns, drowning, choking, cuts and wounds [7,9]. Poisonings are frequent too, but these could be prevented by following some precautionary measures [10]. Eldosoky et al. investigated accidents among 0–12 years old children in Egypt [8], and their consequences by studying the first aid knowledge of their parents. More research has been carried out in Hungary, which examined the first aid knowledge and the motivation of lay people [11–15]. People in Hungary are only required to learn first aid when they want to obtain a driver's license, so their knowledge is often less than what is required. Several authors think that first aid education should start as early as primary school [13,16].

Not only is first aid important, but prevention of accidents are also important. Páll et al. investigated the possibilities of these types of prevention [17]. A program was created which assigned prevention as their main goal [18].

There were many surveys in Europe, which examined the parents' first aid and prevention knowledge [19–22]. Unfortunately they showed that their knowledge is not adequate enough, and several of them do not know the various methods with which accidents could be prevented. The literature shows that basic first aid knowledge is an important point to prevent accidents in early childhood. In our study, we attempted to assess the prevention and first aid knowledge among the parents with children in kindergarten.

Materials and methods

In our research, parents of 3–7 years old children were involved in six kindergartens located in Hungary (Muraszemenye, Tornyiszentmiklos, Lovaszi, Letenye, Lenti, Nagykanizsa). Data collection was made by using a self-fill-in questionnaire. It contained both standardized and self-made elements [19]. Data collection was conducted between November and December 2013. The parents and leaders of the various institutions were notified about the survey before the study began. After obtaining the necessary licenses, the parents received the questionnaires. If there were more children attending the kindergarten from the same family, the parents had to fill out only one questionnaire.

A total of 307 parents were involved in the investigation ($N = 307$). 234 questionnaire ($n = 234$) were returned (return-ratio: 76.2%). It did not excluded any questionnaire due to incorrect or incomplete answers.

The self-made part of the questionnaire contained the following question-groups: sociodemographic, previous accidents of children, and knowledge of parents. The standardized part of the questionnaire contained the following questions: eight situations in which first aid should be delivered. In this case the parents had to choose the right one from the four possible answers.

The statistical analysis was made with SPSS 20.0 statistical software. For analysis descriptive statistics, Chi-square-test and ANOVA were used. A p -value < 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

Results

Sociodemographic data

Most of the questionnaires were filled out by the mothers of children (87.6%). Table 1 shows the sociodemographic data of the parents.

Previously, we mentioned the literature data, which showed the most frequent types of injuries specific at this age [6–8]. The parents had to rank these in the questionnaire. The following results were obtained (Table 2).

Previous accidents

According to the answers, approximately three-quarters of the children have suffered at least one accident earlier in their lives (74.3%). Fifteen of them were injured in the month prior to filling out the questionnaire (6.4%). Most of the accidents occurred at home (88.5%). Other accidents occurred in the kindergarten, on the playground, or at other locations (in the park, garden, or gym). We examined the factors which influenced the occurrence of earlier accidents. It showed that gender did not play any role in accidents (Chi-square = 5.323; $df = 4$; $p = 0.256$). The financial position, diverge from the expected did have influence on the number of the previously accidents, because the results showed that those children suffered the fewest accident, whose parents

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